



PRESS RELEASE

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Sonoma County Water Agency contributes to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Poland at Local Government Event

(Poznan, Poland) — Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) Director and County Supervisor Valerie Brown, and Rohnert Park City Council Member and SCWA Water Advisory Committee Chair Jake Mackenzie, joined other local government officials to offer national governments their support and partnership to limit global warming at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Poznan, Poland from December 9-11, 2008. Director Brown and Council Member Mackenzie represented SCWA and participated in the Local Government Climate Sessions. A clear message was sent at the event: Local climate action must become part of national climate strategies.

“Local governments are the most important project based operations for climate protection in the world and we need to join together to make everyone understand that we will make it happen and we will make our environment cleaner,” said Director Brown at the conference.

Since 2007, cities have mirrored the UN Climate Roadmap in a process called the 'Local Government Climate Roadmap'. They have been advocating for a comprehensive post-2012 climate agreement, which will determine the next phase of what is currently the Kyoto Protocol.

Cities and local governments worldwide have a strong track record of voluntary local climate action. Nations must recognize and build upon these local contributions via strategic partnerships on climate with their local governments. Such national-local climate partnerships should include empowerment, capacity, resources and easier access to funding as well as enabling regulations and framework conditions for the local level.

"National governments can get substantial support in reaching their green house gas reduction targets if they empower municipalities to act on climate. They are well advised to recognize local action in their national climate plans,” said Council Member Mackenzie at the conference.

As the largest energy user in Sonoma County, SCWA realizes the positive impact it can have on the environment by reducing green house gas emissions. That is why in 2006, the SCWA Board of Directors authorized SCWA staff to take several actions to reduce green house gases. In response, SCWA has completed the following:

- SCWA developed a Carbon Free Water by 2015 program with a goal to completely power its water supply and treatment operations by utilizing renewable sources. SCWA’s maximum peak energy load is 12 megawatts. All together, SCWA currently produces 4.5 megawatts of

renewable energy from hydroelectricity (2.5 megawatts) and three solar projects (2 megawatts).

- SCWA developed the Regional Geoechange Energy Efficiency Project that will use recycled water at sanitation treatment plants, including the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District's treatment plant and the Airport-Larkfield-Wikiup sanitation treatment plant, to heat and cool buildings. This project will greatly reduce electricity and natural gas use, thus reduce green house gases.
- SCWA installed electrical outlets in its parking lot to charge its new fleet of plug-in hybrids.
- SCWA is actively investigating new technologies to reduce its carbon footprint, including wind, more solar, wave, anaerobic digestion of dairy and food waste and bio-diesel.

"SCWA is committed to protecting our environment," said Director Brown. SCWA was the recent recipient of the Sky's the Limit award from the Climate Protection Campaign at the Climate All Stars Conference in San Francisco in November, 2008. The award recognized SCWA's ability to plan and implement projects to help reduce GHG.

"As the closest government level to citizens, municipal leaders can accelerate behavioral change within their community and can drive and implement effective action," said Council Member Mackenzie.

Cities are home to 50 percent of the world's population; where up to 80 percent of all energy is consumed. Cities are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly the fast growing cities in developing countries. It is time to involve them.

To view videos of Director Brown and Council Member MacKenzie speaking at the conference, visit the following links:

Director Brown Introduced

<http://pl.youtube.com/watch?v=-qqd9YCiplc>

Director Brown Interviewed by ICLEI

<http://pl.youtube.com/watch?v=9g5RVrT0T2g>

Council Member Mackenzie Remarks

<http://pl.youtube.com/watch?v=-HhKUFiN00w>

Council Member Mackenzie Interview

<http://pl.youtube.com/watch?v=rM83f4g64mg>

Event Website: www.iclei.org/poznan2008

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Sonoma County Water Agency provides water supply, flood protection and sanitation services for portions of Sonoma and Marin counties. Visit us on the Web at www.sonomacountywater.org.